

KEVIN ZOU

3053 Pamplin Hall,
Blacksburg, VA 24061

✉ zou@vt.edu
☎ (785) 317-1126

🏠 [Portfolio](#)
🌐 [LinkedIn](#)

EDUCATION

Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA

Ph.D. in Economics

Expected May 2022

Master of Arts in Economics

Dec. 2018

University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA

Master of Arts in Statistics

Jun. 2017

Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS

Bachelor of Arts in Economics (Magna Cum Laude)

May 2015

Statistics Minor

Dec. 2014

INDUSTRY AND RESEARCH RELATED WORKING EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Researcher

Virginia Tech Economics Laboratory, Virginia Tech

Aug. 2017 - Present

- Develop an algorithm to classify time preference into four categories and apply the method to research data over the last decade.
- Design and conduct two laboratory experiments to investigate causal relationships between group size, contest successful function, weight function, and momentum effect in contest theory.
- Write programs (Python and MATLAB) and analyze data for experimental economics.
- Train undergraduate researchers for the Virginia Tech Economics Laboratory.
- Simulated data for the neuroeconomics research *Focal Stimulation of the Temporoparietal Junction Improves Rationality in Prosocial Decision-making*.

Data Scientist Intern (Remote)

Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Changchun, China

Jun. 2021- Aug. 2021

- Trained machine learning models to classify potential customers for new financial products.
- Developed models to determine the key drivers of an existing customer related to default.
- Validated models built by other data analytic teams.

Statistical Consultant (Remote)

The Lycra Company, Singapore

Feb. 2021 - Apr. 2021

- Worked with an engineering team to monitor the data collection in the quality control process.
- Investigated the effect of reducing sampling frequency on defect detection capability.
- Convinced the stakeholders to reduce the sampling waste by 50%, saving production costs around \$70k annually.

Research Assistant

The Policy Destination Area, Virginia Tech

May 2020 - Sep. 2020

- Participated in developing [COVID Impacts and Influences Database of Databases](#).

Research Associate

The Data Science Consulting Laboratory, University of California, Santa Barbara

Sep 2015 - Jun. 2017

- Helped develop a course in statistical machine learning with R.
- Provided statistical consulting services at the DataLab.
- Advised modeling methods to various research from the MCDB Department.

ACADEMIC AND TEACHING RELATED WORKING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

Department of Economics, Virginia Tech

- Principles of Microeconomics (Econ 2005)

Spring 2022, Spring 2020

Teaching Assistant

Department of Economics, Virginia Tech

- Behavioral Economic Theory (Econ 6014)
- The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior (Econ 4424)
- Analysis of Economic Data (Econ 3254)
- Economic History of Diversity and Inclusion (Econ 1214)
- Experimental Economics (Econ 4434)
- Neuroeconomics (Econ/Neur/Psyc 4454)
- Economics of Regulation (Econ 3004)
- Principles of Macroeconomics (Econ 2006)
- Principles of Microeconomics (Econ 2005)

Fall 2021
Fall 2021
Spring 2021
Spring 2021
Fall 2020
Fall 2019
Fall 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2018
Spring 2018, Fall 2017
Spring 2018, Fall 2017

Head Teaching Assistant

Department of Statistics and Applied Probability, University of California, Santa Barbara

- Statistical Machine Learning (Pstat 231)
- Regression Analysis (Pstat 126)
- Probability and Statistics III (Pstat 120C)

Spring 2017
Fall 2016
Summer 2016

Teaching Assistant

Department of Statistics and Applied Probability, University of California, Santa Barbara

- Introduction to Statistical Machine Learning (Pstat 131)
- Statistics for Economics (Pstat 109)
- Probability and Statistics I (Pstat 120A)
- Introduction to Statistics (Pstat 5A)

Winter 2017
Spring 2016
Winter 2016
Fall 2015

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant

Department of Economics, Kansas State University

- Intermediate Microeconomics (Econ 520)
- Sports Economics (Econ 524)
- Principles of Macroeconomics (Econ 120)
- Principles of Microeconomics (Econ 110)

Spring 2015
Fall 2014
Spring 2014
Fall 2013

SKILLS

Computer Skills

R, Python, Stata, MATLAB, SAS, SQL, Minitab, SPSS, LaTeX, JavaScript, CSS, and HTML.

Statistics Skills

Econometrics, Data visualization, Experimental design, Sampling technique, Linear model, Generalized linear model, Nonlinear model, Multivariate analysis, Machine learning, Model validation, Non-parametric statistics, Bayesian inference, Time series analysis, Stochastic process, Deep Learning, Generalized method of moments

Languages

- Mandarin Chinese (Native speaker)
- English (Full professional proficiency)

Certifications

- Skill Assessment R, Python, MATLAB, Machine Learning, SQL, HTML, JavaScript, CSS (LinkedIn)
- Specific Human Subjects Protection Training Certificate (VT)
- Certificate of Teaching Effectiveness (VT)
- Certificate of Social and Behavioral Research (CITI Program)

HONORS, AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- Behavioral Economics and Finance Research Cultivation Grant (SWUFE, China) *Spring 2022*
- Graduate Teaching Assistantship (VT) *2017 - 2021*
- Graduate Research Assistantship (VT) *Summer 2020, Summer 2019*
- Graduate Teaching Assistantship (UCSB) *2015 - 2017*
- Magna Cum Laude (K-State) *Spring 2015*
- Outstanding Graduating Senior of Department of Economics (K-State) *Spring 2015*
- LeVelle Wood Scholarship Fund (K-State) *2013-2015*
- Ross Alan Haymaker Family Economics Scholarship (K-State) *2014-2015*
- K-state Semester Honor (K-State) *2011-2015*
- Outstanding Junior Honors Award from the Honor Society of Agriculture (K-State) *Spring 2014*
- Anna Maude Smith Fund for Student in Home Economics (K-State) *Spring 2014*
- Margaret Haupt Swift Memorial Scholarship (K-State) *Fall 2013*
- Honor from College of Human Ecology (K-State) *2012 - 2013*
- ELP Outstanding Student Awards (K-State) *Fall 2011*

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Econometrics, Behavioral Economics, Experimental Economics, Game Theory

WORKING PAPERS

1. Group Size Effect in Sequential Multi-Battle Contests: An Experiment Study, with Dr. Yichuan Cai
2. A General Beta-Delta Discounting Model
3. New Hampshire or Super Tuesday, Does the Weight Matter?, with Dr. Yichuan Cai and Dr. Dongwoo Lee
4. A Machine Learning Approach on the Profit of Insider Trading, with Dr. Zhenyu Zhang

PH.D. DISSERTATION: ESSAYS ON CONTEST THEORY EXPERIMENTS AND REVEALED TIME PREFERENCE MODELS

Job Market Paper: *Group Size Effect in Sequential Multi-Battle Contests: An Experiment Study*

This paper presents the result of a laboratory experiment that investigates the group size effect in the sequential multi-battle contest. We first generalized Konrad and Kovenock's (2009) result to multi-player ($n \geq 2$). Then we conducted an n-player ($n = 3$ or 6) multi-battle experiment to compare the all-pay auction and the Tullock lottery side by side. When the number of contestants is increased in a sequential multi-battle contest, we get the following result: First, in battle 1, the boundary distribution is distorted in the all-pay auction, but only the no entry rate is increased in the Tullock lottery. Second, when the players are not in the lead, the dropout rate is higher with more players in the game. Third, even though the total number of battles has not increased significantly due to the increased number of players, more players adopt the dormant-reenter strategy. Finally, when the number of contestants increases, so does the winner effort, the maximum battle effort, and the total contest effort. In general, the theory in the Tullock lottery provides a more accurate prediction than in the all-pay auction.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Dr. Sheryl Ball

Professor (Advisor)
Department of Economics
Virginia Tech
Phone: (540) 231-4349
Email: sball@vt.edu

Dr. Alec Smith

Assistant Professor (Co-advisor)
Department of Economics
Virginia Tech
Phone: (540) 231-7353
Email: alecsmith@vt.edu

Dr. Klaus Moeltner

Professor
Department of Agricultural
and Applied Economics
Virginia Tech
Phone: (540) 231-8249
Email: moeltner@vt.edu

Dr. Matthew Kovach

Assistant Professor
Department of Economics
Virginia Tech
Phone: (540) 231-5764
Email: mkovach@vt.edu

Dr. Walid Saad

Professor
Bradley Department of Electrical
and Computer Engineering
Virginia Tech
Phone: (571) 858-3160
Email: walids@vt.edu